

# SPECIAL PLAYOFF ISSUE!

*Bears-Giants Preview  
Begins On Page 4*



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# BEAR REPORT

A NEWSPAPER DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE CHICAGO BEARS AND THE NFL.

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A Newspaper Devoted Exclusively  
To The Chicago Bears and The NFL

Vol. 10, No. 23 January 2, 1986

## On The Cover...

**PLACEKICKER** Kevin Butler led the NFL in scoring with 144 points. (Bear Report photo by Jonathan Daniel)



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### USPS #3228-5000

Doug Buffone ..... President/Publisher  
Rich Royle ..... Vice President/Business Manager  
Frederick Woods ..... Vice President/Advertising  
Mark Friedlander ..... Editor  
John Weishar ..... General Manager

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## All Bears Healthy

All but one of the Bears' players on the active roster participated in workouts last week and head coach Mike Ditka expects all 45 of his players to be ready for next Sunday's battle vs. the Giants. The only player who missed workouts last week was OT Keith Van Horne. He was with his ill father in California. The elder Van Horne died last Saturday.

## Extensive Playoff Coverage

Next week's issue of the **BEAR REPORT** will feature extensive coverage of the Bears-Giants divisional playoff game. **BEAR REPORT** editor Mark Friedlander, reporter Wally Gullick, columnist Dick Gonski and photographer Jonathan Daniel will all be on hand at Soldier Field next Sunday. The issue will go to press the morning of Monday, January 6.

## Commentary



By  
Doug  
Buffone



## McMahon Will Be the Key

There is no doubt that next Sunday's Bears-Giants matchup will be a classic battle of two tough football teams.

It may be like the good old days when defenses were dominating and teams had to depend on their running attacks to get the job done. Both of these teams have great defenses and awesome rushing attacks, but there has got to be a factor which separates the two clubs.

**OBVIOUSLY, THE BEARS** are a stronger team coming in because they won 15 games during the regular season while the Giants went 10-6. Because of their great defense, the Giants could have won all of the games they lost. But there was one ingredient missing, a championship quarterback.

I know Phil Simms has done a fine job this season and has set all kinds of passing marks, but he is no Jim McMahon. Just look at McMahon's record as a starter. During the last two years, the Bears have been almost unbeatable when McMahon has been healthy.

With the Bears' style of play, McMahon doesn't need to throw the ball 40 times a game to be effective. He knows how to execute the big plays when needed and that means the difference between winning and losing.

**I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND** how players in the NFC selected Simms over McMahon to be in the Pro Bowl. I know McMahon missed some games due to injuries, but he still had an outstanding season. Only Joe Montana had a better rating in the conference.

If I was to pick a quarterback for a crucial contest, I would take McMahon over Simms any day of the week. Simms didn't impress me at all in the NFC Wild Card victory over the 49ers. While he did throw two touchdown passes, one of them was made on a great catch by rookie TE Mark Bavaro. Simms doesn't appear to move around too well and the Bear defense should be able to exploit that fact. Unless Simms takes some quick lessons from Dan Marino on how to roll out and throw on the run, he is going to be in big trouble on Sunday. I know he has a solid offensive line in front of him, but the Bears will find a way to get to Simms if he decides to stay in the pocket all day.

Weather may play a key role in the game plans of both clubs. If it turns out to be an awful day and both teams

have to rely on their rushing attacks, the big edge has to go to the Bears. I know Joe Morris is on fire right now, but I'll take Walter Payton and Matt Suhey over any other duo of running backs in the league. The Bears will never be beaten on the ground.

**IF THE TEAMS ARE** able to pass, the Bears will have to take full advantage of all their weapons. New York's defense is almost a carbon copy of the Bears' and Mike Ditka will have to keep these guys off balance by mixing in the run and pass. The Giants appear to be banged up at cornerback and I hope the Bears will take advantage of this situation.

One thing the Giants love to do is prey on opponents' mistakes. You can't turn the ball over to this team. The Giants also play mistake-free most of the time. The Bears have to find a way to force some turnovers.

If this game goes down to the wire, I have great confidence in rookie placekicker Kevin Butler. He is really in a groove and I'm sure the pressure of a playoff battle won't effect him. On the other hand, New York's rookie placekicker, Eric Shubert, appeared to choke vs. the 49ers. His form was terrible. It seems like he is having some problems handling the pressure of playoff competition.

Now what you've all been waiting for: my prediction for this game. If the Bears can contain Morris, they will be able to put a lot of pressure on Simms. The biggest plus-factor for the Bears will be if they can get an early lead. This will help them take control of the contest. I strongly feel the Bears will cover the spread on this one and should win by at least 10 points. How does 20-10 sound?

### BUFFONE'S PLAYOFF PICKS

**DOLPHINS** by EIGHT over BROWNS  
*Miami has too much firepower.*

**RAMS** by FOUR over COWBOYS  
*Dallas is way too inconsistent.*

**BEARS** by TEN over GIANTS  
*Chicago has too many weapons.*

**PATRIOTS** by THREE over RAIDERS  
*The surprise team of the playoffs.*  
*Last week's record: 2-0 vs. the final spread.*



**NEW YORK RUNNING** back Rob Carpenter (26) loves to dive for first down yardage. (Bear Report photo by Jerry Pinkus)



# This Defense May Be Bears' Best Ever

By Chet Coppock  
Guest Columnist

This isn't a free dinner at the Pump Room, choosing Secretariat over the local plowhorse or picking a winner between Georgetown and the University of Indiana at Peru.

The Chicago Bears have traditionally been forerunners in defensive toughness and conceptual change. And no two clubs stand out with any more authority or grit than the 1963 champions under George Halas or the current Mike Ditka-coached team that will shortly begin the journey to the land of the \$4 drink, the French Quarter and the over-priced breakfast at Brennan's.

**THE '63 BEARS**, who popularized the phrase buzz and rub, were guided by George Allen. But as years went by, George Halas would insist that it was, in reality, Jim Dooley who labored the long hours at the projector and the blackboard to create a defensive scheme that would permit just 144 points in 14 games.

Buddy Ryan is the resident guru at Halas Hall. As a technician, Ryan is without peer and he's blessed with just enough moxie to remind you as often as possible that Buddy himself is a bona fide gridiron genius. Is he grouchy? Sure. What coach isn't? But you can forget the old Jerry Kramer line about Lombardi "that St. Vincent treated all his players the same — like dogs."

Beneath his gruff exterior, Ryan is a puppy dog with an uncanny ability to climb inside each of his players' craniums to make them understand two key factors, a belief in Ryan and a belief in themselves.

**SO WHICH DEFENSE** was or is the better of the two? Which group of players would you want in the hip pads for the one big game — winner take all — against the Lombardi dynasty clubs at Green Bay, Chuck Noll's men of steel during the 70's at Pittsburgh or against Al Davis any time after the 11th week of the regular season?

Ed O'Bradovich, a crown prince and clown prince of football during the 1960's at Cubs Park, will argue all night long or at least until closing time that his teammates were without peer.

O'B can back up his argument with a large degree of legitimacy. The 1963 Bear offense, directed by Bill Wade, wasn't just conservative. It redefined the word. Wade, himself, was Barry Goldwater in high tops.

**IT WAS AN OFFENSE** that totaled just 301 points, 52 of those on one Sunday against the Rams in Los Angeles when Mike Ditka was on the receiving end of four touchdown passes.

O'B, to this day, jokingly refers to the '63 "O" as the 11 sticks of dynamite. He'll also remind you that his teammates guarding the goal line in the old Western Division led the NFL in 11 of 19 defensive categories.

Still, while Halas may have gone with an offense that was no immediate threat to Fouts at San Diego, it was an offense that rarely gave up the ball in what's commonly referred to in this era as "plus territory."

**FLAT OUT, THE '85 defense** is individually and collectively better.

Let's begin with this premise. The Buddy system operates in a league of throwball where the chuck has gone the way of the Edsel and holding by offensive linemen is as common as the cold hot dog.

Today's defensive backs don't operate the way J.C. Caroline's, Abe Woodson's and Emlen Tunnell worked the lanes two and three decades ago.

**THEY RARELY HIT.** They rarely challenge. They sprint and hope for the best. Frankly, it has got to be easier to walk the night shift beat in the South Bronx.

Plus, don't forget the new 12th man. Narrow hash marks have changed the impact of the game far more than most people realize.

Watch today's runner turn the corner for the extra three or four yards. It didn't happen in 1963 unless you were Jimmy Brown or Lennie Moore. It has forced clubs, not by design but by salvation, to go for linebackers who have the mobility of a blocking back.

**GALE SAYERS IS** the most graphic example. Under today's rules with today's approach, Sayers would have run for 2,000 yards at least once and probably three or four times during his career had he been blessed with health. Sayers on a carpet with narrow hash marks behind the '85 Bear offensive line? It would have been a license to steal.

Philosophically, you can draw no real comparison. The '63 Bears, anchored by the late Bill George in the middle, played the 4-3-4. And that was it. There was no 5-2. The nickel back was a generation away. The dime concept has only become a part of play by play rhetoric during the past four or five seasons.

This year's Bears are, indeed, trend setters. Just as Halas sent coaches to the film room to copy the T-formation after the Monsters demolished the Redskins 73-0 in 1940, and just as Bill Arnsparger altered defensive concepts with the 53 at Miami, Ryan has made the 46 the defense of



**LINEBACKER MIKE SINGLETARY** is the force behind the Bears' awesome defense. (Bear Report photo by Jonathan Daniel)

the 80's. Some day, around the year 2000, he will be revered as a modern day Amos Alonzo Stagg. He will also be remembered as that rare assistant who was never afraid, in fact got a kick, out of jabbing the needle in his superiors.

**CONSIDER OTHER FACTORS.** Halas Hall looks like Gold's gym and it's hardly unique among existing NFL facilities. These days virtually every player spends a sizeable amount of time pumping iron.

Twenty-two years ago weight training was virtually nonexistent. In fact, the old timers will tell you that for all practical purposes, Stan Jones was the only Chicago Bear who devoted himself to the practice of pumping iron.

Are the athletes better today? Next question. Of course they are. So are race horses and Indy cars.

**LOOK AT SIZE** and speed. Wilber Marshall would've been a fullback in 1960. Otis Wilson would have been a natural tight end.

This game is no longer a contact sport. It's a collision sport played for the most part on astroturf, the most disgusting and injury-creating substance ever to find its way to the NFL. The carpet has, in my opinion, doubled the impact figure of the so-called big hit.

If Walter Payton had been given the opportunity to weave his tricks on natural grass, he might have given George Blanda a run for a record on length of service.

**SO LET'S DO A** modest breakdown on these two great defenses.

**Intelligence:** Give the edge to the old timers if only because of Bill George. Forget the coach on the field nonsense. At one point during his stellar Chicago career, Bill was filing facts on 400 different defenses created by the late Clark Shaughnessy.

**Pride:** A toss up. Doug Atkins closed 900 saloons but on game day he struck fear in Unitas, Starr and Tittle. Conversely, Mike Singletary would be a brilliant player if you gave him \$10 a game.

**PHYSICAL CONDITION:** End of issue. The 1985 team is Hulk Hogan. The 1963 club with all due respect to Ditka and others was the guy at the beach who got sand kicked on his face and passed the time at night dreaming of pecs like Charles Atlas.

**Ultimate reward:** Back to the graybeards. They have the rings. Our current friends must still get a ticket to go way down yonder.

So, perhaps, it's best to develop a combo. Take the best of both worlds, '63 and '85 and let George Allen work the film room and lick his index finger while Buddy Ryan tells

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# New York Giants vs. Chicago Bears



Sunday, January 5  
Soldier Field  
Chicago, Illinois



## New York Giants' Numerical Roster

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	College
3	Eric Schubert	PK	5-8	193	R	Pittsburgh
5	Sean Landeta	P	6-0	200	R	Towson St.
11	Phil Simms	QB	6-3	214	7	Morehead St.
15	Jeff Hostetler	QB	6-3	212	2	West Virginia
17	Jeff Rutledge	QB	6-1	195	7	Alabama
20	Joe Morris	RB	5-7	195	4	Syracuse
21	Tedd Watts	CB	6-0	190	5	Texas Tech
23	Perry Williams	CB	6-2	203	2	N. Carolina St.
26	Rob Carpenter	RB	6-1	226	9	Miami, Ohio
27	Herb Welch	DB	5-11	180	R	UCLA
30	Tony Galbreath	RB	6-0	228	10	Missouri
33	George Adams	RB	6-1	225	R	Kentucky
34	Elvis Patterson	CB	5-11	188	2	Kansas
36	Mark Haynes	CB	5-11	195	6	Colorado
43	Terry Kinard	S	6-1	200	3	Clemson
44	Maurice Carlton	RB	6-1	225	R	Arkansas St.
48	Kenny Hill	S	6-0	195	5	Yale
51	Robbie Jones	LB	6-2	230	2	Alabama
53	Harry Carson	LB	6-2	240	10	S. Carolina St.
54	Andy Headen	LB	6-5	242	3	Clemson
55	Gary Reasons	LB	6-4	234	2	NW La. St.
56	Lawrence Taylor	LB	6-3	243	5	North Carolina
57	Byron Hunt	LB	6-5	242	5	SMU
58	Carl Banks	LB	6-4	235	2	Michigan St.
60	Brad Benson	T	6-3	270	8	Penn St.
61	Chris Godfrey	G	6-3	265	3	Michigan
62	Conrad Goode	T	6-6	285	2	Missouri
63	Karl Nelson	T	6-6	285	2	Iowa St.
64	Jim Burt	NT	6-1	260	5	Miami
65	Brad Oates	C	6-3	265	R	BYU
67	Bill Ard	G	6-3	270	5	Wake Forest
69	David Jordan	G	6-6	276	2	Auburn
70	Leonard Marshall	DE	6-3	285	3	LSU
71	Casey Merrill	DE	6-4	258	7	Cal-Davis
72	Gordon King	T	6-6	275	8	Stanford
75	George Martin	DE	6-4	255	11	Oregon
76	Curtis McGriff	DE	6-5	276	6	Alabama
78	Jerome Sully	NT	6-3	270	4	Missouri
79	Dee Hardison	DE	6-4	274	8	North Carolina
80	Phil McConkey	WR	5-10	170	2	Navy
82	Vyto Kab	TE	6-5	240	4	Penn St.
86	Lionel Manuel	WR	5-11	175	2	Pacific
87	Byron Williams	WR	6-2	183	3	Tex. Arlington
88	Bob Johnson	WR	5-11	171	2	Kansas
89	Mark Bavaro	TE	6-4	245	R	Notre Dame

### COACHING STAFF

Head Coach: Bill Parcells

Assistants: Bill Belichick, Romeo Crennel, Len Fontes, Ray Handley, Fred Hoaglin, Pat Hodgson, Lamar Leachman, Mike Pope, Mike Sweatman, Johnny Parker.



QUARTERBACK PHIL SIMMS

### By BEAR REPORT Staff

Bears' head coach Mike Ditka must be happy that he didn't waste time during practice sessions last week.

Obviously, the Bears had no idea who they would face in the playoffs. Because of that fact, they had to spend time preparing for both the 49ers and the Giants. But they spent more time preparing for the Giants because they have not faced that NFC East club since 1977.

IT WAS TIME WELL spent because the Giants will be coming to Soldier Field next Sunday to battle the Bears in an NFC Division Playoff contest. The Giants earned that right by knocking off the 49ers 17-3 in the NFC Wild Card game last Sunday at Giants Stadium.

The Bears-Giants game will be played before a packed house at Soldier Field. For those fans who aren't lucky enough to have tickets, it will be televised nationally via CBS (WBBM-TV, Channel 2) beginning at 11:30 a.m. CST. It will also be carried throughout the midwest on the WGN (720 AM) Bears' radio network.

There are very few players on either team who participated in the infamous "Ice Bowl" game in 1977 when Bob Thomas kicked the Bears into the playoffs. And many of these players were still in diapers when the two clubs last met in the playoffs. That was in the NFL title game at Wrigley Field in 1963.

"THESE ARE TWO OF the older teams in football. The Giants are a great organization and the Bears are a great organization.

Continued Page 6

## Chicago Bears' Numerical Roster

No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
4	Steve Fuller	QB	6-4	195	28	7	Clemson
6	Kevin Butler	K	6-1	204	23	R	Georgia
8	Maury Buford	P	6-0	191	25	4	Texas Tech
9	Jim McMahon	QB	6-1	190	25	4	BYU
18	Mike Tomczak	QB	6-1	195	22	R	Ohio St.
21	Leslie Frazier	CB	6-0	187	26	5	Alcorn St.
22	Dave Duerson	S	6-1	203	24	3	Notre Dame
23	Shaun Gayle	CB	5-11	193	23	2	Ohio St.
26	Matt Suhey	FB	5-11	216	27	6	Penn St.
27	Mike Richardson	CB	6-0	188	24	3	Arizona St.
29	Dennis Gentry	RB	5-8	181	26	4	Baylor
31	Thomas Sanders	RB	5-11	203	23	R	Texas A&M
31	Ken Taylor	CB	6-1	185	21	R	Oregon St.
33	Calvin Thomas	FB	5-11	245	25	4	Illinois
34	Walter Payton	RB	6-10	202	31	11	Jackson St.
45	Gary Fencik	S	6-1	196	31	10	Yale
48	Reggie Phillips	DB	5-10	170	24	R	S. Methodist
50	Mike Singletary	LB	6-0	228	26	5	Baylor
51	Jim Morrissey	LB	6-3	215	22	R	Michigan St.
52	Cliff Thrift	LB	6-1	230	29	7	E.C. Oklahoma
55	Otis Wilson	LB	6-2	232	27	6	Louisville
57	Tom Thayer	G-C	6-4	261	23	R	Notre Dame
58	Wilber Marshall	LB	6-1	225	23	2	Florida
59	Ron Rivera	LB	6-3	239	23	2	California
60	Tom Andrews	OL	6-4	267	24	2	Louisville
62	Mark Bortz	G	6-6	269	24	3	Iowa
63	Jay Hilgenberg	C	6-3	258	26	5	Iowa
70	Henry Waechter	DT	6-5	275	26	4	Nebraska
71	Andy Frederick	T	6-6	265	31	9	New Mexico
72	William Perry	DT	6-2	325	22	R	Clemson
73	Mike Hartenstine	DE	6-3	254	32	11	Pennsylvania St.
74	Jim Covert	T	6-4	271	25	3	Pittsburgh
75	Stefan Humphries	G	6-3	263	23	2	Michigan
76	Steve McMichael	DT	6-2	260	27	6	Texas
78	Keith Van Horne	T	6-6	280	27	5	USC
80	Tim Wrightman	TE	6-3	237	25	R	UCLA
82	Ken Margerum	WR	6-0	180	26	4	Stanford
83	Willie Gault	WR	6-0	178	24	3	Tennessee
85	Dennis McKinnon	WR	6-1	185	23	3	Florida St.
86	Brad Anderson	WR	6-2	198	24	2	Arizona
87	Emery Moorehead	TE	6-2	220	31	9	Colorado
89	Keith Ortego	WR	6-0	180	22	R	McNeese St.
95	Richard Dent	DE	6-5	263	24	3	Tennessee St.
98	Tyrone Keys	DE	6-7	267	25	3	Mississippi St.
99	Dan Hampton	DT	6-5	267	27	7	Arkansas

### COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH: Mike Ditka

ASSISTANTS: Jim Dooley, Dale Haupt, Ed Hughes, Steve Kazor, Jim LaRue, Ted Plumb, Johnny Roland, Buddy Ryan, Dick Stanfel.



TE Mark Bavaro



LB Byron Hunt



DE Leonard Marshall



RB Joe Morris



LB Gary Reasons





LINEBACKER LAWRENCE TAYLOR led the Giants in tackles during the regular season. (Bear Report photo by Jerry Pinkus)

## New York vs. Chicago Lineups

### Giants' Defense

LE	76 Curtis McGriff, 75 George Martin
NT	64 Jim Burt, 78 Jerome Sally
RE	70 Leonard Marshall, 79 Dee Hardison
LOLB	57 Byron Hunt, 54 Andy Headen
LILB	55 Gary Reasons, 51 Robbie Jones
RILB	53 Harry Carson, 51 Robbie Jones
ROLB	56 Lawrence Taylor, 54 Andy Headen
LC	34 Elvis Patterson, 21 Ted Watts
RC	23 Perry Williams, 27 Herb Welch
SS	48 Kenny Hill, 21 Ted Watts
FS	43 Terry Kinard

### Giants' Offense

WR	88 Bobby Johnson, 87 Byron Williams
LT	60 Brad Benson, 72 Gordon King
LG	67 Billy Ard, 69 David Jordan
C	65 Bart Oates, 62 Conrad Goode
RG	61 Chris Godfrey, 69 David Jordan
RT	63 Karl Nelson, 72 Gordon King
TE	89 Mark Bavaro, 82 Vyto Kab
WR	86 Lionel Manuel, 80 Phil McConkey
QB	11 Phil Simms, 17 Jeff Rutledge
RB	20 Joe Morris, 33 George Adams
RB	26 Rob Carpenter, 44 Maurice Carthon

### Giants' Specialists

PK	3 Eric Schubert
P	5 Sean Landeta
LS	65 Bart Oates, 62 Conrad Goode
KOR	80 Phil McConkey, 33 George Adams
PR	80 Phil McConkey
H	17 Jeff Rutledge, 15 Jeff Hostetler

### Bears' Offense

WR	83 Willie Gault, 82 Ken Margerum
LT	74 Jim Covert, 71 Andy Frederick
LG	62 Mark Bortz, 75 Stefan Humphries
C	63 Jay Hilgenberg, 60 Tom Andrews
RG	57 Tom Thayer, 75 Stefan Humphries
RT	78 Keith Van Horne, 71 Andy Frederick
TE	87 Emery Moorehead, 80 Tim Wrightman
RB	34 Walter Payton, 29 Dennis Gentry
FB	26 Matt Suhey, 33 Calvin Thomas
QB	9 Jim McMahon, 4 Steve Fuller
WR	85 Dennis McKinnon, 86 Brad Anderson

### Bears' Defense

LE	99 Dan Hampton, 73 Mike Hartenstine
LT	76 Steve McMichael, 72 William Perry
RT	72 William Perry, 99 Dan Hampton
RE	95 Richard Dent, 98 Tyrone Keys
LLB	55 Otis Wilson, 52 Cliff Thrift
MLB	50 Mike Singletary, 52 Cliff Thrift
RLB	58 Wilber Marshall, 59 Ron Rivera
SS	22 Dave Duerson, 23 Shaun Gayle
FS	45 Gary Fencik, 23 Shaun Gayle
LC	27 Mike Richardson, 48 Reggie Phillips
RC	21 Leslie Frazier, 31 Ken Taylor

### Bears' Specialists

PK	6 Kevin Butler
P	8 Maury Buford
PC	63 Jay Hilgenberg, 57 Tom Thayer
KC	63 Jay Hilgenberg, 57 Tom Thayer
H	4 Steve Fuller, 18 Mike Tomczak
PR	89 Keith Ortego, 31 Ken Taylor
KR	83 Willie Gault, 29 Dennis Gentry

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# Giants

Continued From Page 4

It's going to be great to get together in a playoff contest again. It's going to be a great football game," predicts Ditka.

Ditka and Giants' head coach Bill Parcells have been friends for years and both have great respect for each other and each other's team.

"I like what Bill has done with the Giants," said Ditka. "He's gotten a lot of heat from people in New York because his team hadn't won the big game until they knocked off the 49ers last Sunday. You can't win the big ones in this league until you have the players. He's got the players now."

**PARCELLS REALIZES HIS** team probably won't have as easy a time vs. the Bears as it did vs. the 49ers. San Francisco went into this game with more key players hurt than healthy. It was the first time the 49ers had not scored a touchdown since they played the Bears at Soldier Field in 1983.

"Our guys fought hard today," said Parcells. "They had their minds made up that this was going to be the day. The 49ers had been our nemesis in the past few years. They knocked us out of the playoffs last year. That gave us a lot of motivation."

What about the Bears?

"**THE BEARS ARE** a great team. You don't win 15 games in this league by accident," he said.

In fact, Parcells added he and Ditka had wished for this matchup before the season began.

"In a steam room in Arizona last winter (during the NFL meetings), we talked about it being New York and Chicago in the playoffs. Just like the old days," Parcells said.

**DITKA EXPECTS THIS** contest to be a hard-hitting affair controlled by the defenses, just like the '63 championship.

"The Giants play the kind of football it takes to win in the NFL," Ditka said. "Their offense is very balanced and their defense comes after you. They take no prisoners. It's going to be a real war next week."

San Francisco quarterback Joe Montana can attest to the fact that the Giants' defense can be rough on opponents. The 49ers had been rolling on offense in recent weeks and even finished first in the NFC in total yardage during the regular season. But San Francisco had to settle for a lone field goal last Sunday. The Giant defense intercepted one pass, forced one fumble and sacked Montana four times.

"**THIS IS ONE OF** the biggest games we've ever played in our careers," said Giant linebacker Lawrence Taylor. "Our whole

defense played well. We put a lot of pressure on Montana. That was the key."

While the defense was doing its magic, the New York offense did just enough to win. Quarterback Phil Simms completed 15 of 31 passes for 181 yards and two touchdowns. New York actually should have scored nine more points but rookie kicker Eric Shubert shanked three of four field goal attempts.

Once again, the big star on offense for the Giants was running back Joe Morris. The 5-7, 195-pound flash out of Syracuse rushed for 141 yards on 28 carries. The four-year veteran has been on a tear in recent weeks. During the last nine regular season games, he rushed for 999 yards and scored 18 touchdowns. He led the NFL in touchdown scoring this year with 21.

"**LAST YEAR, THE** Giants were running the ball very poorly. Now they're running exceptionally well. They are taking people apart with their running game," says San Francisco head coach Bill Walsh.

Of course, no opponent of New York can just key on Morris, because Simms can pick a defense apart. Both touchdowns against the 49ers came on play-action passes. During the regular season, Simms completed 275 of 495 passes for an NFC-high 3,829 yards, 22 touchdowns and 20 interceptions. He was also selected to the Pro Bowl. Simms has started 32 consecutive games over the past two seasons after starting only 35 games between 1979 and 1983 due to a variety of injuries.

Simms has a lot of quality targets to throw to. WR Lionel Manuel led the team in receiving with 49 catches for 859 yards and five TD's, but missed the last four regular games due to a hamstring injury. He was activated for the 49ers contest and caught 3 passes for 56 yards. Other Simms targets include rookie TE Mark Bavaro (Notre Dame) who caught 37 for 511 and four TDs and WR Bobby Johnson, who caught 33 for 533 and eight TDs.

The club's defensive leaders include Taylor (team-high 104 tackles, 13½ sacks), LB Harry Carson (101 tackles), DE Leonard Marshall (team-high 15½ sacks), DE George Martin (10 sacks) and CB Elvis Patterson (team-high six interceptions). Patterson sustained a sprained ankle on the opening kickoff of the Wild Card game and did not play for the remainder of the contest. His status is uncertain for the Bears' game. Backup Ted Watts was also injured in the game.

Placekicker Eric Shubert, who began the season as a school teacher, connected on 10 of 13 field goals during the last eight regular season games but had a poor performance vs. the 49ers. Rookie punter Sean Landeta, who beat out an army of prospects during training camp didn't disappoint Parcells as he averaged 42.9 during the regular season. Phil McConkey averaged 19.5 on kickoff returns and 8.3 on punt returns.



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# Defense Will Decide the Outcome Sunday

Defense will be the name of the game this Sunday at Soldier Field when the Bears host the New York Giants.

Both teams whipped the former Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers this year and neither defense allowed the ex-champs a touchdown. This game features the top two defenses in the NFC with the Bears ranked No. 1 overall.

**BOTH TEAMS HAVE** dangerous offensive weapons, starting with running backs Walter Payton and Joe Morris. The running game will be crucial given the caliber of defense on the field Sunday. The Bears allowed an average of 82 yards net rushing over 16 games. That's one yard less than Morris' average per game this season.

The team which establishes its running game early will be in the driver's seat. The running game sets up the pass and consumes the clock. This won't be a high-scoring game so establishing the run and grabbing the lead will make it difficult to play catch-up. To play catch-up, you must throw the football and that would be suicide against either defense. So watch the running game early.

There are key matchups all over the field in this one, but let's start up front. Payton and Morris have run successfully because of the blocking of their respective offensive lines. Both offensive lines are going to have their hands full. The Giants have a hard-hitting group of linebackers similar to the Bears, and their pass rush is outstanding. Leonard Marshall will be Jim Covert's assignment. Marshall is the blind-side pass rusher similar to the Bears' Richard Dent. Marshall terrorized Joe Montana last Sunday and also sealed off the running lanes normally open to Roger Craig.

**LINEBACKERS LAWRENCE** Taylor and Harry Carson will be coming strong and that's where the Bears have an advantage. Both Walter Payton and Matt Suhey are excellent blockers whereas Joe Morris and Rob Carpenter are not. The blocking of the Bear running backs is going to be a key this Sunday.

The Bears' linebacking corps will be charging all afternoon. Phil Simms doesn't have the help in his backfield that Jim McMahon enjoys. Look for Otis Wilson, Mike Singletary and Wilber Marshall to spend a lot of time in Simms' face.

The Bears' pass rush will be tested because Simms can move around in the pocket, though he doesn't throw as well on the run as he does when he's allowed time to set up. That's another key. If Simms gets time, he's good enough to pick apart a defense. Against the 49ers, he completed 15 of 31 passes for 181 yards and two touchdowns, both to tight ends.

**THE BEARS HAD 34** interceptions this year, 10 more than the Giants. With the Bears blitzing, look for Simms to try a fly pattern to Lionel Manuel who will be one-on-one with Leslie Frazier or Mike Richardson. The Bear cor-



By  
Dick  
Gonski

nerbacks will be going man-to-man with Manuel and Bobby Johnson.

The Giants' secondary is suspect. True, they shut down Jerry Rice last week, but the 49ers dropped eight passes that were catchable. If McMahon gets time to throw, Willie Gault and Dennis McKinnon could be game-breakers. Against San Francisco, cornerbacks Ted Watts and Elvis Patterson sustained injuries. Look for the Bears to attack either one.

Morris is on a roll and has been sensational in the second half of the season. He is an excellent cutback runner. The aggressive Bear defense can not afford to overpursue Morris because of his ability to change direc-

tions without losing steam. It will be up to Wilson and Marshall as well as Dan Hampton to force Morris to the outside and string him out, allowing the rest of the defense time to catch up to him.

**IF SUNDAY BRINGS** blizzard conditions to Soldier Field, this game could become a field goal contest. If it does, the Bears will be in great shape. Kevin Butler converted 31 of 38 field goal attempts during the regular season. He made 28 of 29 inside of 40 yards. Six of his seven misses were from more than 40 yards out.

In contrast, the Giants' kicker, Eric Shubert, missed three out of four tries vs. the 49ers last week. He is the third placekicker employed by the Giants this season. Overall, the Giants' trio of kickers converted just 22 of 33 field goal attempts during the regular season. That's a weakness.

The home field could be a big advantage for the Bears who are unbeaten at Soldier Field in 1985. Four of the Giants' six losses came on the road. It will be important for the Bears to grab an early lead and get the sellout crowd into the game. That would add fuel to the fire in the Bear defense.

**DICK VERMEIL MADE** an interesting comment on CBS-TV after the Giants' 17-3 win over the 49ers. He said it will be tough emotionally for the Giants to win on the road after beating the defending Super Bowl champs at home. Vermeil thinks the Giants may have drained themselves emotionally in that win. That's another reason it will be crucial for the Bears to score early, then dominate with their defense.

If there was ever a playoff game that promised to be dominated by defenses, it's this one. The Bears have used their defense to set up the offense all year. Visions of Dent, Wilson and Hampton must be dancing in Simms' head this week.

If the Bears' defense can force an early turnover or two, and if the offense capitalizes, the Bears should win. Turnovers are a no-no in playoff competition and this season the Bears were number one in takeaway/turnover ratio.

If they play their game, the Bears should advance. It shouldn't take a lot of points either. But it will take a great game by the Bear defense in chilly Soldier Field.



**LINEBACKER HARRY CARSON** has been a key member of the Giants' defense for the past decade. (Bear Report photo by Jerry Pinkus)

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# More Bears Deserve Pro Bowl Recognition

The Bears put eight players into the Pro Bowl and coach Mike Ditka gave honorable mention to seven more.

"Every team can say it should have more people," said Ditka.

**BUT ONLY THE** Bears finished 15-1. Their all-stars got there the old-fashioned way. They earned it.

Pro Bowl time is one of the most intriguing times of these years. It never used to mean that much in Chicago. It was just a way to give Gale Sayers, or Dick Butkus or Walter Payton some recognition that escaped the Bears as a team.

It is one of the great tributes to Payton that as long as he has been a Bear, no other Bears' offensive player had been selected to the Pro Bowl. It is also one of the great injustices of the selection system. The implication was that Payton was the only worthy player and was accomplishing outstanding feats entirely on his own. The Bears were leading the league in rushing without any blocking.

**PAYTON MADE THE** Pro Bowl seven times before any of his escorts accompanied him.

"I don't put too much weight on it," said Payton. "It's more a popularity contest when it comes to certain positions."

Tackle Jim Covert and center Jay Hilgenberg became the first offensive linemen selected from the Bears since center Mike Pyle went in 1964.

**"I GUESS IT WAS** just the law of averages," said Covert. "I think it's hard to single out a player or two players when five of us are playing the position. If one of us doesn't work, the whole line is not going to work."

So why don't the Bears play against an all-star team, just to show the value of teamwork?

Otis Wilson and Mike Singletary had great seasons and deserve to be all-pro linebackers. Wilber Marshall had more interceptions than either of them and the New York Giants' Lawrence Taylor didn't have a single interception.

**"THE INEQUITIES USUALLY** are fairly obvious," said quarterback Steve Fuller. "It just hurts a little more when it gets close to home."

How could the Giants' Phil Simms make it at quarterback ahead of Jim McMahon? San Francisco's Joe Montana deserved to go, but would any coach in America really

pick Phil Simms ahead of Jim McMahon if he wanted to win a game?

Dave Duerson was shocked when he was selected at safety.

**"IN FACT, WHEN** Kenny Valdiserri told me, I told him he was telling me a bunch of lies and junk. It was just too much to believe," said Duerson. "When it was confirmed, I sat there and watched some film and I couldn't see very



By  
Don  
Pierson

well."

Duerson deserved to go. As a replacement for last year's Pro Bowl starter, Todd Bell, Duerson tied for the National Football Conference lead in interceptions for a strong safety.

"Because I was on the hot seat, I guess everybody was watching Dave Duerson and seeing what he was going to do. I guess by performing half-way decent in nationally-televized games, it left a good impression," said Duerson.

**THE BEARS SENT** five players from their defense, including linemen Richard Dent and Dan Hampton. But the leading tackler, free safety Gary Fencik, didn't make it.

Fencik is having as good a year as anyone in football," said Ditka.

"They must have a heckuva weak safety somewhere

in this stinkin' league," said defensive coordinator Buddy Ryan.

**FENCIK HAD ONE** fewer interception than Philadelphia's Wes Hopkins, the free safety selected. But Fencik also was an apparent victim of the voting system.

Each team votes for free safeties and for strong safeties. The positions are ranked separately. But the Pro Bowl only takes three safeties. The man with the third most votes gets to go regardless of position.

There are many big-name free safeties in the NFC and not many well-known strong safeties. Besides Hopkins, there is Fencik, San Francisco's Ronnie Lott, Dallas' Michael Downs, the Giants' Terry Kinard, and the Rams' Johnnie Johnson.

**HOPKINS GOT THE** most votes at free safety and made the team. San Francisco strong safety Carlton Williamson got the most votes at strong safety and made the team. Duerson came in third, probably because the vote at free safety was split more than the vote at strong safety.

"By and large, the people who deserve to go get to go," said Fencik in defense of the system. "I just didn't get enough interceptions."

Hampton was "amazed" he made it at defensive end after playing only seven games there.

**"I DON'T THINK IT'S** reputation so much. Players watch film every day. I voted for Bill Fralic, a rookie, because I thought he did a good job," said Hampton. Fralic is an offensive lineman for the Atlanta Falcons.

"That's all we got?" asked Dent when he heard the list.

Ditka thought tackle Steve McMichael was the catalyst that kept the pass rush together, especially through the first part of the season. He was a steady performer who probably got lost in the numbers game. *Sports Illustrated* honored him and not Hampton or Dent.

**"EVERYBODY WHO HAS** played on defense has played well," said Hampton.

Fuller said if a person could be a little flower on the wallpaper of the team rooms when selections are made, you would have a lot of good stories to write.

Keith Van Horne admitted that one of the tie-breakers in voting was "Who made it last year?"

Continued Page 10



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CENTER JAY HILGENBERG (63) will be making his first Pro Bowl appearance next February. (Bear Report photo by Jonathan Daniel)





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## Bears-Giants History

The last time the Bears played the Giants, it was on December 18, 1977. In that game, played on an icy field at the Meadowlands, placekicker Bob Thomas kicked a 28-yard field goal with nine seconds left in overtime to send the Bears into the playoffs for the first time since 1963.

The Bears last faced the Giants in the playoffs in 1963. The site was Wrigley Field and the contest was the NFL Championship. The Bears prevailed 14-10. The Bear defense intercepted five passes in that game and two of those pickoffs set up Bear touchdowns. The Bears scored on two and one-yard runs by quarterback Bill Wade.

The Bears hold a 38-22-2 advantage vs. the Giants in all games played between the two clubs since 1925. The Bears have won four out of six vs. the Giants in post-season play.



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## Final NFL Standings

### AFC STANDINGS EAST

	W	L	T	PF	PA	Home Record	Playoff Record
x-Miami	12	4	0	428	320	8-0-0	13-9
y-N.Y. Jets	11	5	0	393	264	7-1-0	4-4
y-New England	11	5	0	362	290	7-1-0	2-4
Indianapolis	5	11	0	320	386	4-4-0	8-7
Buffalo	2	14	0	200	381	2-6-0	3-5

### CENTRAL

	W	L	T	PF	PA	Home Record	Playoff Record
x-Cleveland	8	8	0	287	294	5-3-0	7-13
Cincinnati	7	9	0	441	437	5-3-0	2-5
Pittsburgh	7	9	0	379	355	5-3-0	15-8
Houston	5	11	0	284	412	4-4-0	6-6

### WEST

	W	L	T	PF	PA	Home Record	Playoff Record
x-L.A. Raiders	11	4	0	338	302	7-1-0	19-11
Denver	11	5	0	380	329	6-2-0	2-5
Seattle	8	8	0	349	303	5-3-0	3-2
San Diego	8	8	0	467	435	6-2-0	4-8
Kansas City	6	10	0	317	360	5-3-0	5-3

### NFC STANDINGS EAST

	W	L	T	PF	PA	Home Record	Playoff Record
x-Dallas	10	6	0	357	333	7-1-0	20-15
y-N.Y. Giants	10	6	0	399	283	6-2-0	7-15
Washington	10	6	0	297	312	5-3-0	11-11
Philadelphia	7	9	0	286	310	4-4-0	7-5
St. Louis	5	11	0	278	414	4-4-0	1-4

### CENTRAL

	W	L	T	PF	PA	Home Record	Playoff Record
x-BEARS	15	1	0	456	198	8-0-0	8-8
Green Bay	8	8	0	337	355	5-3-0	13-5
Minnesota	7	9	0	346	359	4-4-0	10-12
Detroit	7	9	0	307	366	6-2-0	6-4
Tampa Bay	2	14	0	294	448	2-6-0	1-3

### WEST

	W	L	T	PF	PA	Home Record	Playoff Record
x-L.A. Rams	11	4	0	334	261	6-1-0	10-16
y-San Francisco	10	6	0	411	263	5-3-0	9-6
New Orleans	5	11	0	294	401	3-5-0	0-0
Atlanta	4	12	0	282	452	3-5-0	1-3

x-clinched division title; y-clinched wild card spot.

## New Press Box

With the onslaught of national media covering the Bears in the playoffs, an extra press box has been built at Soldier Field. The new box will seat 80 media members. Bears' director of media relations Ken Valdiserri expects to issue over 200 media credentials for the Bears-Giants game.

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Town & Country; "Blackened redfish, a la Paul Prudhomme, is almost as good as the master's version." New York Times, September 21, 1984; "His desserts are gemlike exercises in wizardry, many of them with the highest charm quotient to be found in the city." Gourmet Magazine, February, 1985.



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## Pro Bowl

Continued From Page 8

McMICHAEL VOTED FOR Tampa Bay guard Sean Farrell, but Hampton didn't "because he leg-whipped me."

Singletary couldn't figure out why Leslie Frazier didn't make it at cornerback. Frazier led the Bears in interceptions and was second to Dallas' Everson Walls in NFC interceptions. The difference between Walls and Frazier, however, is that Frazier is the cornerback opposing offenses stay away from. Usually, the cornerbacks with the most interceptions are the ones quarterbacks think they can beat.

Ditka was upset that rookie placekicker Kevin Butler was ignored. All Butler did was lead the entire league in scoring.

"It's nice to make, but it's really not the important thing," said Hilgenberg. "The important thing is still that last game in January."

Ditka's only hope is that the Bear's coaching staff doesn't go. Pro Bowl coaches come from the losing teams in the conference title games. Ditka and staff went last year and that was enough.

## Practices In Georgia

The Bears are practicing this week at the Atlanta Falcons' training facility in Suwanee, Georgia in preparation for their playoff battle vs. the Giants next Sunday at Soldier Field. The Bears left Chicago on Monday and will probably stay in Georgia until Friday. They will work out at Soldier Field on Saturday.

The Bears spent last week practicing inside the field house at Morton East High School in west suburban Cicero. The Bears have practiced at Morton East for the past few weeks. It is a two-hour round trip between Halas Hall and Morton East.

## Ditka Coach Of Year

Head coach Mike Ditka has been selected as the NFL Coach of the Year by the Associated Press. Ditka received 66 of 74 votes from writers and broadcasters from each NFL city. New England's Raymond Berry received five votes and Dallas' Tom Landry got three.

"It's very rewarding. I'm not trying to be humble. It shows you what can happen if you've got good assistant coaches and good players," said Ditka.

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# Bears' Defense Is Always Improving

Coaches are fond of saying a team either gets better or it gets worse. No in between. Players are fond of saying it, too. Players are fond of saying anything they hear coaches say often enough.

The point of the little homily is that a team has to keep improving, or else it swirls down the drain into the garbage disposal. That's not entirely true, though. In the Bears' case, no one could say they were better in their three December games against the Dolphins, Colts and Lions than they had been when they played the Falcons, Colts and Lions the first time.

**THEY'RE STILL SUPER** Bowl favorites. From a high enough standard of excellence, a certain slippage is permissible. It's almost inevitable.

Same with the Bear defense. The Mobsters of the Mid-

By  
Kevin  
Lamb



**CORNERBACK MIKE RICHARDSON (27)** has made a variety of big plays this season. (Bear Report photo by Jonathan Daniel)

way didn't figure to be better this year than last year. They didn't have to be. They were that good last year.

But they improved.

"**I DON'T THINK** there's any question of that," coach Mike Ditka said.

The Lions' 17 points in the last game kept the Bears from breaking Pittsburgh's record of 1985 points in a 16-game season. But Pittsburgh set the record in 1978, when the NFL's passing attacks were DC-3s to this year's Concordes. Even that 14-2 Pittsburgh team held only eight teams to 10 points or less. The Bears held 11 teams that low, and five without an offensive touchdown.

They started slowly. Three of their first five opponents scored 19 or more, a figure exceeded only by Miami in the last 11 games. But ever since the Bear defense came out of hibernation, the earth has moved. Their opponents have not. The Bears didn't give them enough yards to circle the wagons.

Still, defensive coordinator Buddy Ryan scoffed all season at the very mention of his 1985 defense in the same breath with the 1984 edition. He pointed out flaws with the microscopic eye of a man trying to knock down the price of a used car. Or a coach trying to motivate his players.

"**WOULD I DO THAT?**" he asks with chuckling innocence. Yup. Finally relenting, he said this year's unit could prove it was better than last year's if it held on to No. 1 in passing, rushing and total yards in the last game.

Even when it didn't, Ryan was not unhappy. The Lions took the pass defense crown away from the Bears, who finished third behind Washington and Pittsburgh. They did it, Ryan said, because the Bears kept turning the ball over to them. "You get enough chances, you're going to get yards," he said. Still, there were six sacks and seven takeaways to soothe Ryan's disappointment over the triple crown.

"The thing that makes you so proud of this bunch," he says of the 1985 defense, "is they started out so bad and had to claw their way up. They could have folded their tents and been a mediocre defense. It takes a lot of guts not to do that."

**THE MOST DRAMATIC** improvement was in passing yards, where the defense ranked 23rd after eight weeks and first after 15.

Dan Hampton gave two reasons for the defense's slow start. One was his own slow recovery from knee surgery. Hampton's nose tackle position is the first domino for toppling offenses in the "46" defense the Bears use so often.

It also took time, Hampton said, to blend right linebacker Wilber Marshall and strong safety Dave Duerson into the intricate choreography of switching and blitzing. They replaced excellent players in Al Harris and Todd Bell, whose holdout absences were excuse enough for the defense to deteriorate.

"**I THINK BUDDY** was more cautious at first because he wasn't sure of the capabilities of Duerson and Marshall," Hampton said. "But now he's given them the same responsibilities as the rest of us."

Even without the Pro Bowl strong safety and the first-round draft choice at right linebacker, the core of the defense was intact. It still has had the variety of ways to adjust to an offense and the experience and talent to bring them off. It still had the personnel for Ryan's philosophy

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# Improving

Continued From Page 11

to confuse and abuse offenses: to give them lots of fronts and coverages and to rush the passer with as many men as it took to hurry him.

"The team concept is something a lot of people take for granted," Hampton said. "If you go down a Pro Bowl roster like it was a Sears catalog, you wouldn't necessarily get a team that's invincible."

"WHEN SOMEONE HAS to play us, they have to play the Bears. Sure, we've got our name starts, but it's our team that beats you."

The biggest star on any play against the Bear defense is the one in position to stop it. There should always be someone. The thing that especially pleases Ditka is that there has been someone to stop the misdirection plays that gave the Bears trouble last year.

He recalled a play against Dallas when "Wilber went inside, (Tony) Dorsett went outside and he gained 22 yards. The next time, Wilber went outside, Dorsett went outside and they met for a two-yard loss."

"THEY MADE THE adjustment. That's what I see. They've made adjustments to the counter plays, the bootlegs, the plays that hurt us in the past and aren't hurting us anymore."

The best illustration of the Bears' variety and experience is what they've done in second halves. Before Detroit scored 14 points in the second half, 12 straight offenses generated only 27 points after halftime. That's when teams have the most time to adjust to opponents.

"We can do so many things," linebacker Mike Singletary says. "We can change our total game plan at halftime."

RYAN LISTS FIVE major goals for his defense. The first two are obvious. Win the game and limit the points. The Bears' improvement in both is obvious, too.

The next two goals are third-down efficiency, because that stops drives that turn into scores, and yardage. The numbers this year aren't quite as good as they were last year, but they're good enough to lead the league.

Fifth is sacks. For one thing, they reflect the most important element in pass defense: hurrying the quarterback.

They're also a more reliable way of stopping drives than turnovers.

"YOU COACH TURNOVERS every year, but you don't get them every year," Ryan says. "You've got to catch the football. Seattle got all sorts of turnovers last year and everyone said, 'Yeah, they coach it.' Apparently they're not coaching 'em this year. They're not getting 'em."

Still, Ryan is gratified that the Bears led the NFL with 54 turnovers and a plus-23 differential. That was a high priority this year. It's one of several areas where the defense has clearly improved.

Stopping big plays was the other high priority. The Bears allowed 15.4 yards per pass completion last year, worst in the league. That's down to 13.2.

ONE REASON IS THE health at cornerback. By the end of last season, the only cornerback able to play was Mike Richardson, who had a cast on his hand. "We've been fortunate," Gary Fencik says. "We haven't had to use our young cornerbacks."

They stopped the run well enough to lead the league last year, but they trimmed more than six yards off their average game against the run, down to 82.4. "It's going to be hard for teams to do a whole lot against our defense," Ditka said, "because if you can't run the ball, you've got problems." Then the pass rushers can rev up.

They ranked second instead of first in sacks, but they had 64, only eight short of their record total last year. Just the threat of the Bears' pass rush stops offenses from doing what they want.

PERHAPS THE BIGGEST improvement from last year was at stopping teams inside the 20-yard line. Last year, Bear opponents scored touchdowns on 53 percent of their drives past the 20 and averaged 4.5 points.

The best defenses should keep those numbers below 45 percent and 4 points. This year, the Bears allowed a 42 percent touchdown rate and 3.8 points per penetration.

Ditka has grown tired of having to explain why this year's defense is better than last year's. It doesn't matter, he says. It's good enough.

"Our defense is what makes me so excited about this team," linebacker Cliff Thrift said a few weeks ago. "If we'd have had this defense when I played with San Diego, we would have won three Super Bowls."

## Bear Report Letters

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BEAR REPORT welcomes all Letters to the Editor. Due to space limitations, it may be necessary to shorten letters to fill the space available. BEAR REPORT does not necessarily agree with the views stated in the letters we receive. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

### Payton Is Always Great

Dear Editor,

Recently, there have been numerous letters to the BEAR REPORT testifying to the greatness of Walter Payton. Most letters cite his record-breaking performances on the football field. I have been a season ticket holder for 12 years, and have witnessed some of these great accomplishments such as, 275 yards vs. the Vikings, breaking Brown's all-time rushing mark vs. New Orleans, etc.

I believe the true greatness of Walter Payton lies off the football field.

I was at a team practice at Platteville this summer and witnessed one such event. Long after the team had retired to their lockers and showers, here was Walter running wind sprints all alone for a full 20 minutes. When he finally walked toward the locker rooms, a man with his two young daughters approached Walter and asked him to pose for a picture with his two girls. Poor Walter was obviously tired and spent, nevertheless, he took time to stop and pose for this man, whom he probably had never met before.

I'll never forget the smiles on the faces of those two young girls, nor the beaming grin on the face of a very tired Walter Payton. THAT is greatness!

Walter has eclipsed normal definitions of the word, and elevated its meaning. It will be a sad, sad day for the entire nation, and for football fans everywhere, when he decides to retire. I hope it is not for at least five more years, as I have some young children and would love to have them witness his feats at Soldier Field. In fact, I just may retire my season tickets when he retires, as I don't believe the football world will ever see the likes of him in my lifetime.

I don't know if you read these letters or not Walter, but if you do, THANK YOU for being so great an individual. Perhaps we could all take a lesson on Christianity and love of man from this truly GREAT person.

Patrick G. McCarthy  
Galena, IL

### A Wish Came True

Dear BEAR REPORT,

A few weeks ago, I had witnessed the game that for over a decade I wished would come true, and that was the Chicago Bears' CREMATION of the Dallas Cowboys. The Bears painted the perfect picture of the kind of game I wanted to see against Dallas. The Bears are definitely the new team in the spotlight and have proven to the nation that they are the BEST team in the NFL. The "Monsters of the Midway" are back and the Cowboys are no longer America's team.

I can't express how much enjoyment I got out of seeing this game. The contest had everything in it I wanted to happen from beginning to end. Dominating defense that shut down Tony Dorsett as well as several vicious sacks on the Cowboys' quarterbacks, who all had a great view of the blue Texas sky. Although the Poke QBs did complete some passes, but a few too many were caught by the men in the Navy Blue.

Walter Payton, who seems to get better with age, obviously was being keyed on by the Dallas defense. But it seemed to only inspire Payton to play better as he continued to break tackles, earning each yard, until he finally blasted through the Pokes for another 100-yard game. The "Fridge" provided some comedy relief trying to help Walter into the end zone. But he also played adequate defense, pouncing that 300-pound frame on Cowboy backs. Even after Chicago's starting lineup went out, the back-up players continued to pound on Dallas. There were many fans cheering on the Bears in Irving. It seemed to be a combination of loyal Bear fans and the typical, spoiled Dallas fans, deciding to root for the winning team.

As many lucky, scumbag, sickening victories Dallas has pulled off in the past, it's about time Chicago gave 'em what they deserve. Adding up such factors as this was Dallas' worst defeat in history, Ditka (pupil) beat Landry (teacher), Chicago won their division, and Payton passed the 1,000-yard mark erases the bad experiences of the past.

But don't get me wrong. I don't mean to overshadow anyone else who plays on the Bears, nor am I overlooking what the Bears have accomplished this season. The entire Bear organization has worked hard to get to where they are today. The Bears' total team effort throughout the season is the key to their success. From the offensive linemen to the special teams. Not to mention the coaching staff. I hope everyone on this Bear club reaches their goals by the end of this season.

I'm looking forward to the months ahead. The Bears are hungry and can't wait to get their hands on their first Vince Lombardi Trophy. Onward to the playoffs and the Super Bowl!

Rob Doornink  
Syracuse, NY

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## Not Bitter Over Back-Up Role

# Hartenstine Will Be Ready When Needed

To some extent, Mike Hartenstine has been forgotten in The Super Bowl Shuffle.

Now in his 11th year with the Bears, Hartenstine has been relegated to a back-up role. His status as a regular vanished after a few games at the beginning of the season because Dan Hampton was moved over to allow for the celebrated emergence of William Perry on the defensive line.

**HARTENSTINE**, THE quintessential team player, has been gracious about having to step down, but those who know him well expected nothing else.

"I was not at all surprised at how well he's been taking it. Not at all. Mike Hartenstine is a gentle giant," says Clyde Emrich, the Bears' strength coach who has worked countless hours with Hartenstine, a prolific weightlifter, over the years.

"Mike has great character. He's so well adjusted to

By  
Michael  
Haggerty



everything. No matter what the stresses, he does beautifully. If you had a list of the qualities of a good person on a piece of paper, you could just go ahead and fill his name in at the top of the sheet.

"WHEN NEW PLAYERS join the Bears I tell them to watch Mike Hartenstine if they want to know what it takes to make it. I've used him as a role model many times.

"He's well respected by everybody. People know he's a dependable person. They know that he's an honest person. Also they know that he's a gentleman, but if you goof around with him, you'd better watch out," Emrich laughs.

"If he's out on the field working out and you do something he doesn't like, you'd better be ready for him the next time he comes at you. You don't mess around with him because he's got the power to do something about it. Mike Hartenstine is nobody's doormat."

**HARTENSTINE IS AMONG** the strongest players on the Bears roster. He's been known to lift as many as 100,000 cumulative pounds a day.

But the accomplishment of all that strength can't, by itself, make up for the disappointment of not being a starter any more. And make no mistake; Hartenstine does indeed want to be a regular again.

"But all I can do is the best I can to prepare for when they need me," says Hartenstine, who has a streak of 163 consecutive games played. Only Bob Parsons, with 167, has more in Bears' history.

"I CAN CONTROL only the things that are in my control," he philosophizes. "Things that are not in my control I can't really sit around and worry about. All I can do is be as prepared as I can for the games and keep my work habits and just see what happens."

Hartenstine's work habits remain solid. He continues to practice well and he's not above handing out a compliment to Perry, whose presence forced him out of the starting lineup. "William is all right. He's young, a rookie and he's got a lot to learn, but he's all right," Hartenstine says.

The former Penn State All-American did get his starting role back for one game toward the end of the season. In the next-to-last game of the regular season, he started against the New York Jets.

"THE BOTTOM LINE," says Hartenstine, who always



MIKE HARTENSTINE HAS gotten a lot of work on the special teams this season. (Bear Report photo by Jonathan Daniel)

tells it like it is, "is that Dan Hampton had been hurt all week and so he missed practice all week. We have a rule here that if you don't practice then you don't start.

"But I knew that after a couple of series Dan was going to come in, because he could play. There was no reason to not play him. And he did come in."

Hartenstine could see the handwriting on the wall at the beginning of the season. He was getting inklings that Perry was going to be put into the defensive line at Hartenstine's expense.

"EVEN WHEN I WAS starting at the beginning of the season—the coaches were hinting for awhile that they were hoping to get William in there," he recalls. "He was the number-one pick and you want to see your number-one pick play.

"They were trying to work William into the defense more, so I guess the best move was to move Dan over and put

in William. I would imagine, I would guess, they thought that I was the weakest link."

Whatever weakness there might be, Emrich is determined to counter it with Hartenstine in the coming off-season in the Bears' weight room, the scene of so many Hartenstine triumphs.

"I SUSPECT THAT Mike'll be training even harder," says Emrich. "We'll try to close the gap, try to make up the gap. With him, there's just no quitting.

"We'll try to design a new approach. Is it speed? Then let's do what we have to to get the speed back. Is it because of an injury, something that might've been accumulating over the years? Well, then, how can we get around it?

"We'll try whatever's needed, because the Bears need Mike Hartenstine. We'd surely like to have him back next season."

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# Best Ever

Continued From Page 3

the press about 81, 99 and 61, and figures out new cons to thrust at overrated clubs like the New York Jets.

**UP FRONT. BEGIN** with Doug Atkins. He might have been the finest defensive end the game has ever known. Fridge Perry will never really know the game because he'll never face Jim Parker, a guy whose only mistake was to enter the league during the Atkins era.

Put Atkins on the left side, thus allowing Richard Dent to remain a fixture at right end. And isn't Dent, himself, through the Ryan genius, a trendsetter? Doesn't he have clubs all over the Rozelle empire aching to get that big kid with speed to chase the quarterback on the blind side?

Dan Hampton and Fred Williams, two country boys both from Arkansas, share the middle. Williams was recently named to the *Chicago Tribune's* all time Chicago Bears' squad and deservedly so. He was a classic hell raiser but also a huge man with superb mobility and remarkably good instincts for the game and the individual matchup.

**HAMPTON IS BIONIC.** I defy anyone to show me or tell me about an athlete on the big time level with greater pain tolerance than this big stud, who's gone to the Pro Bowl both inside and outside.

Should we require help off the bench, O'Bradovich and Steve McMichael can duke it out for playing time. Both possess similar personality ingredients. Mongo was a little better against the run. O'Bradovich was a brutal pass rusher who played for a number of years in the Atkins shadow.

Let's also remember that it was O'B's pickoff on that frozen turf in Wrigley Field on December 29, 1963 that set up the Bears' game-winning score in their title victory against Allie Sherman and the Giants.

**BILL GEORGE**, beyond cerebral, was the greatest linebacker of his era. Huff got the ink. Nitschke got the rings. But the guys who played are united behind the man who typified Chicago Bear toughness.

William is my choice at middle linebacker, though five years from now I might give the vote to Mike Singletary. As for now, let's move the Samurai to right linebacker.

Otis Wilson, who's matured into a "force" in this league, takes the left side. And he takes it over Joe Fortunato, who was a consensus All Pro in 1963.

Big "O" is just the better athlete.

**HOWEVER, TAKE NOTE.** Given their respective eras, Bill George, Joe Fortunato and Larry Morris must be given a collective edge over Singletary, Wilson and Wilber Marshall.

To this day, on the basis of one given year, I have never seen a better trio of linebackers. Their mistakes occur about as often as Doug Buffone picks up a lunch tab.

But in today's game of "throwball," speed would be their undoing.

**AS FOR THE** secondary, Davey Whitsell and Mike Richardson are a wash at the left corner. Richardson is still vulnerable and appears confused from time to time. Whitsell, a boo-bird target on the '63 club, nevertheless was a guy who breathed fire and had an undying belief in the one guy that mattered — Davey Whitsell.

It was his 39-yard interception, with under 40 seconds to play at Wrigley during the season's climactic 14th weekend, off Earl Morrall that gave the Bears a win over Detroit and put a lock on a Western Division title in the Bears' march toward an outright championship.

Richie Petitbon, the club's career leader in interceptions, is the choice over Dave Duerson at strong safety. Petitbon had remarkable speed plus the size to challenge the



LINEBACKER WILBER MARSHALL (right) has made a lot of people forget about holdout Al Harris. (Bear Report photo by Jonathan Daniel)

Ron Kramer's of the 1960's. He has never been given his just due.

**AS FOR FREE** safety, this is perhaps the toughest choice. Rosey Taylor led the '63 club with nine pickoffs and had the ability to skate the field from sideline to sideline with a track man's speed. He was also a fierce tackler for a guy who was listed at 185 pounds but couldn't have weighed over 170.

He's a standoff with Gary Fencik. Fencik is the Ryan computer in the current center field position. He's also blessed with a tremendous ability to assert himself quickly on the run with superior football instincts. It amazes me that this guy was a free agent dropped by the Dolphins before he hooked on in Chicago.

Les Frazier gains a slight edge on Bennie McRae on the right corner. McRae was just a second-year player the season the Bears won the roses. He was already showing signs of brilliance but at the time was not the equal of Herb Adderly or Dick "Night Train" Lane.

**FRAZIER IS PURELY** a consummate football player. So to compensate, if we go nickel we'll bring McRae off the bench. Should you care to work the dime, J.C. Caroline would be yanked out of moth balls.

Caroline was no longer a regular in '63, but in his own way, a way perhaps never publicized, introduced the era of the big play athlete on the special teams.

Those who saw his pop on Adderly in the Bear-Green Bay rematch in '63 can still feel Herb's eyes bouncing off J.C.'s elbows.

**DECISION TIME.** 1985 is the choice as a collective unit. But on a comparison basis, man to man, era to era, you almost walk off with a tie. Now what do ya say we really start the argument? I'll buy the first round!

Chet Coppock is the sports director of WMAQ (670) Radio in Chicago. His nightly "Coppock On Sports" show can be heard from 6-7 p.m. CST in 30 states.

## Final League Rankings

The Bears led the NFL in the following statistical categories in 1985: total defense (by 185 yards); rushing defense (by 163 yards); possession time (34:33 average); interceptions (34); rushing touchdowns scored (27); rushing TD's allowed (6) and opponents pass completion (47.4%).

The Bears were second in the NFL in the following categories: sacks (64, Giants had 68); touchdowns on returns (7 — tied with Seattle, one behind Rams) and scoring (456 points, 11 behind Chargers).

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# More Letters

Continued From Page 12

## Unfair Advantage

Dear BEAR REPORT,

As a 15 year veteran BEAR fan, but a rookie BEAR REPORT fan, I want to thank you for your great newspaper. It has given a whole new dimension to my CHICAGO BEARS enthusiasm.

A couple of comments if I may:

As usual, the Bears had to worry about playing the opposing team AND the officials. The Miami game was no exception. Through their own admission the Boys in Stripes screwed up another big play for us with an erroneously thrown flag in the third quarter. At that time (I felt anyway) the momentum was shifting back to our side.

This game should have been ours. The blocked punt was a fluke, Clayton was lucky enough to snag a Danimal deflection, and of course The Flying Yellow Hanky! (2 TD's and a penalty that should not have been).

And by the way, did you see the bozo in the crowd that had his shirt off trying to show America his tan? He had on his chest (in Miami colors I might add) "#72 SUCKS".

He must have been talking about Ronnie Lee — our #72 is a REFRIGERATOR not a sweeper! The sun must have fried his brain.

Anyway, what I wrote for was to thank Mr. Ditka, his coaches and the 45 players that make up our CHICAGO BEARS for a great season. It's a pleasure to be a part on Sunday afternoon.

Super Bowl XX — The Year of The Bears

Sincerely,  
Tony Perkins  
Muncie, IN

## Can Always Improve

Dear Editor,

A few groups for Tom Sanders (Dec. 12 BEAR REPORT): As the former Chief Engineer of an older nuclear-powered submarine, the former Material Engineer Officer of the most diverse nuclear-powered submarine squadron in the Atlantic Fleet and as the current Executive Officer of a new construction nuclear-powered attack submarine, nobody is more familiar, at a working, deck plate level, with the term, "Don't fix it if it ain't broke." However, my submarine training has imbued a few other by-laws into me:

- 1) You're not as good as you think you are;
- 2) There is always room for improvement;
- 3) Next time the standards will be higher; and
- 4) You never had enough, or too many, good sailors.

My entire point is that the team would be better off with Al Harris and Todd Bell than they are without them. Why that is so simple

— depth and flexibility. If Fencik or Duerson goes down, who would you rather have available, Bell or Gayle? Two of the three back-up linebackers wouldn't even be on the team if Harris had not held out and Cabral and Rains had not been injured. One of them was cut by San Diego, the team with the worst defense in the league. Who would you rather have coming in if Marshall or Wilson went down, Harris or one of these two? Plus, in a real pinch, Harris could play defensive end.

In addition to all of the above, having Bell and Harris under contract would change the entire approach to the 1986 draft.

Without them, the team may easily have to use two of their high picks for a defensive back (a strong safety if a top cornerback isn't available since Fencik has said he is getting near the end) and a linebacker. With them, the team can do as they darn well please — even draft a quarterback in the first round if that happens to be the position of the top-rated player available. Or a running back, wide receiver, whatever. The point is, they won't be the least bit constrained.

Several years ago, there was a top-selling book called *You Can Negotiate Anything*. Evidently, Mr. Vainisi and Mr. McCaskey did not read it. They chose to make examples of two veterans who contributed a lot to the team. You'll never convince me that the team couldn't arrive at a settlement if they chose to do so. Every other team in the league, including those teams who had to deal with Mr. Slusher, were able to do so.

Sincerely,  
Vic Fiebig  
Tabb, VA

## A Communication Problem?

Dear Doug,

What is the problem between Mike Ditka and Jim McMahon? Is it true that they don't speak to one another?

According to John Madden, coach Ditka and McMahon use other people to give each other messages!

How are we going to win the Super Bowl if our coach and our quarterback are mad at each other? How do the other players feel about the relationship between the coach and McMahon? Is McMahon another McEnroe?

No other team in the NFL can match the Bears man for man but if we are going to start bickering with each other or having big heads, then we will end up on our butts. If there is a problem player, then I say, "Run him out of town."

BEAR BALL IS TEAM BALL!

James McDowell  
Sioux Falls, SD

## Critics Are Jealous

Dear Doug,

At the half during the loss to the Dolphins, three of the late season additions to our "Rowdy Section" went home.

When we gathered again to cheer the Bears to victory in the home finale vs. the Colts, there were a few more faces missing.

We were far more disappointed in the behavior of these fair-weather fans than in the team's play in two meaningless games. A 13-1 record is, apparently, not good enough! All of our effort, the careful cultivation of our recent converts into true Black and Blue Believers, seemed to have been wasted. In the end, the winning streak, the "Fridge", recordings and videos mattered more than home-field advantage during the playoffs, and a Super Bowl berth.

The game vs. the New York Jets only fueled our anger. Not only were guys wimping out on the Bears (we won't even start on the media), but the game was scheduled for Saturday. Since we both have businesses to run that normally require our presence on Saturdays, it was no small feat to arrange for the time off.

But the efforts of the Bears this season demand no less an effort from the fans, and the word went out that the "Rowdy Section" would be open.

Now the kicker. Not only did every single missing face suddenly reappear, we actually gained two fans.

Their reasons for coming back were varied. One said he wanted to watch Walter try to extend his 100-yard game streak. Another said that if the Bears are a legitimate Super Bowl contender, a good showing against the Jets was a must. For him, this was the acid test. Someone else noted that Jet QB Ken O'Brien was the NFL's top-rated passer. If the Bear defense could rebound from two sub-par (for them) performances in a row, against such a quality QB, all would be forgiven. Whatever the reasons, at least everyone came. Including the infamous Packer Backer.

From the opening kickoff to the final gun, it was obvious to even the most casual observer in the group that the hibernation period had ended. The Bears are back on the prowl, as hungry as ever.

And that's good. There are thousands of victory-starved fans just like us, just as the Team. (Probably more so considering the length of our wait.)

We think we understand, at long last, why the critics are on the Bears' case. How does the word JEALOUSY strike you?

Mike Cellini, Buffalo Grove, IL

and

Len Levy, Glenview, IL

## All-Pro Bears

The Bears placed five players on the Associated Press, and six players on the United Press International All Pro teams. The Bears on the AP squad are: RB Walter Payton, OT Jim Covert, DE Richard Dent, LB Mike Singletary and DT Steve McMichael. The following Bears made the UPI squad: RB Walter Payton, OT Jim Covert, C Jay Hilgenberg, DE Richard Dent, LB Otis Wilson and LB Mike Singletary.

## Miscellaneous Bears' Notes

The Bears finished the season 8-0 against NFC Central teams, marking the first time since 1973 (Vikings) that a team in the NFC Central went undefeated in divisional play... Kevin Butler led the NFL in scoring with 144 points. That is the most ever by a NFL rookie. He set five Bear records: field goals, season (31 — Mac Percival had 25 in 1968); consecutive field goals (13 — Bob Thomas has 11 straight in 1984); points, season (144 — Gale Sayers scored 132 in 1965); field goal percentage, season (81.6 — Bob Thomas had 78.5% in 1984); field goal attempts, season (38 — Mac Percival had 36 in 1968)... DE Richard Dent led the NFC in sacks with 17, marking the second consecutive year he has led the conference in sacks... QB Jim McMahon finished second in NFC passing (behind San Francisco's Joe Montana) with a 82.8 rating... RB Walter Payton finished second in NFC rushing (behind Atlanta's Gerald Riggs) with 1,551 yards... Willie Gault finished second in NFC kickoff returns (behind the Rams' Ron Brown) with a 26.2 average... 21 different players wound up in the scoring column this season for the Bears including eight defensive players... The Bears have won 17 of their last 19 games at Soldier Field... The Bears have won 23 of the last 27 games Jim McMahon has started... The Bears' 198 points allowed this season is just three shy of Pittsburgh's league record of 195 points given up in 1978... Mike Ditka has an overall record of 36-21 since joining the Bears prior to the 1982 season. He has guided the team to 30 wins in their last 38 regular season games.

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